

MUSIC.

THE GARDEN CONCERTS.

The cordiality with which Theodore Thomas was received on Tuesday evening, when he returned to his post after a short holiday, was a gratifying indication that connoisseurs of music appreciate the value of his labors for the advancement of art, and understand what an exceptional position he occupies among the musicians of the country. The demonstrations of welcome have been repeated on the subsequent evenings with considerable emphasis. Last night there was an unusually large audience and a programme of particular interest, a large proportion of the pieces on which were either quite new or at least fresh. Mr. Thomas conducted.

PART I.

Overture, "Alestro"..... Gluck
Pasanglia..... Bach
Hungarian Dances..... Hofmann
Selections from the 3d Act of the "Meister-singer"..... Wagner
PART II.
Symphony No. 4, in E, "Conservation of Sounds". Spohr

Euphodie Homme, No. 1..... Beethoven
Romance..... Mozart
Turkish March..... Mozart

The overture to "Alestro" has not been played here by the Thomas orchestra until within a few days, for strange as it may seem, it is only a year or so since New-York began to learn something of the masterpieces of the great composer and reformer from whom Wagner traces his artistic lineage. "Alestro" is one of the noblest, though not the very foremost, of his works, and the overture shows all that vim and statuose magnificence which is his most striking characteristic. For Gluck's music we imagine Thomas must have a peculiar fondness. The perfect drill of the orchestra counts for a great deal in a work whose best and broadest effects are attained by a comparatively simple management of string harmonies; but besides this the eloquent interpretation shows unmistakably the influence of a conductor in close sympathy not only with the exponents but the composer. Still finer last night was the Bach "Pasanglia," an arrangement for the orchestra by H. Esser, of which we can hardly speak too highly. Here we have the old master in one of his grand and stately moods, and the art by which the orchestra is led almost imperceptibly gradations of force through a crescendo which fully takes the imagination captive is unequalled except by Bach himself. This, too, was performed with the strictest fidelity and with electrical spirit.

The "Hungarian Dances" by Hofmann are new. There are two of them, both exceedingly brilliant and dashing, and both showing rather more of the Gipsy *gora*, and we should judge of the real national spirit, than the Hungarian dances by Brahms which have become so popular; though merely as music the Brahms dances are the best. The gorgeous Introduction, Quintet and Finale from the third Act of the "Meistersinger" brought the first part of the concert to an effective close.

But the length of the intermissions, the Spohr Symphony would have had an curious effect sandwiched between Wazier and Liszt. As it was, its snuff and incisive harmonies were separated by such wide intervals from the rest of the programme that not much of its beauty was sacrificed. The adversaries of the new school set great store by Spohr, yet here, in his best and most popular orchestral works, they have veritable "programme music" which they are accustomed to denounce as an outrage and an absurdity. The symphony was written to illustrate a poem by Carl Pfeiffer on music as an element of natural beauty. The first movement (Largo and Allegro) depicts the gloom of chaos before the creation of sound, contrasted with the brightness which burst forth when the music of nature began to breathe through the woods and echo along the shore. The composer lingers but a moment in the uncertainty of chaos; he breaks into fluent song after a few very few measures, and even the "up roar of the elements" is supposed to be induced by the closing part of the movement, is but a gentle and well conducted conclusion.

The second movement (Andantino, Allegro, Andantino) symbolizes the music of love, and consists of a charming cradle song, a short and merry dance, and a beautiful serenade, given to a solo violoncello. Then for the third movement (Tempo di Marcia, Andante Maestoso), we have a fine military march, mingled with tender strains supposed to express the emotions of waiting and anxious wives, and followed by a choral hymn of thanksgiving after victory. The last movement (Largo, Adagietto) comprises a dirge, which gives place to a mournful yet still sad theme, entitled "consolation in grief." The work is crowded with beauties, but in Spohr's characteristic fault: The soft chromatic harmonies soon clay the taste, and the composer's care to avoid harshness has undeniably been carried too far. Musical forms are so strictly followed that even chaos and battle might almost be chanted; and partly perhaps in consequence of this elimination of softness, partly perhaps in consequence of the nature of the subject, the climax of interest is reached before the last movement is begun.

VON BULOW.

The manager of the Von Bulow concerts has prepared a biographical and explanatory pamphlet, which, albeit somewhat excited in tone at all men publications are, gives us much interesting information respecting the great pianist who is shortly to visit us. Dr. Hans Von Bulow was born in Dresden in 1830, and died under Fred. Weick, the father of Mme. Schumann. The law, however, was his destined profession, and he went through the university courses at Leipzig and Berlin before an overwhelming passion for music drove him to abandon a promising career at the bar and devote his whole time to art. He was an enthusiastic disciple of Wagner, and a disciple, pupil, friend, and finally son-in-law of Liszt, who had a great influence in the development of his genius, and probably helped to secure for him that instant recognition which attended his first public performances. In Germany his professional life has been a long series of triumphs and excitements, not only as a pianist, but as an orchestral leader and an operatic conductor. He gave a series of Wagner's operas at Munich, with an astonishing consciousness and precision of ensemble, remaining at Munich several years until his health gave way and his physician sent him to Italy. The pamphlet before us lays great stress upon his labors as an interpreter of the new school, by means of the piano and the orchestra, and a defender of its principles by his sharp and ready pen. It gives little prominence, however, to the not less important fact that he is equally distinguished as an interpreter of the grandioses of the classical masters. His rondoings as the very first of living experiments of Beethoven's piano music, and his success in Paris, where the new school is an abomination, and in London, where it is not yet understood, have been quite remarkable as in Germany.

The date of the first concert of Dr. Von Bulow in New-York is not yet fixed. It will be about the latter part of October, the precise day depending upon the completion of the new Chelcoker Hall, in Pittsburg, where the performances will take place. We hear nothing of any "supporting artists," and we trust there will be none, for an artist of Von Bulow's name should be heard alone. He will have an orchestra, however, and negotiations are on foot to obtain the services of the only one in America worthy of such an occasion—we mean of course Theodore Thomas. The combination would be an interesting and appropriate one, for Thomas and Von Bulow are old friends, with many tastes, sympathies, and peculiarities in common.

NO EXCUSE FOR PROFANITY.

To the Editor of The Tribune.

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